

precise part of Mexico where it is found, and our ignorance on this point has led to some doubts as to the validity of the species. Mrs. Smith's collection contains a male example, which was shot in August, 1888, at Amula in the State of Guerrero, at an altitude of 6000 feet above the sea. Its distinctness both from *C. massena* and from *C. ocellatus* is quite obvious, and is fully discussed in Verreaux's paper. We are still unacquainted with *C. sumichrasti* of Lawrence from Tehuantepec, which seems to be distinct from all the above-mentioned species.

XXIII.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

49. *Buller's 'Birds of New Zealand.'*

[A History of the Birds of New Zealand. By Sir Walter Lowry Buller. Parts VII.—XI. 1888. Folio. London.]

Since we last noticed this important work Parts VII. to XI. have been published, and the whole will probably be complete before this number of 'The Ibis' is issued. Part VII. finished the first volume and contains the title-page, preface, and introduction. Parts VIII., IX., and X. commence the second volume and contain illustrations of the following species:—

Charadrius obscurus, *C. bicinctus*, *Thinornis novæ zealandiæ*, *Anarhynchus frontalis*, *Recurvirostra novæ ho'landiæ*, *Himantopus leucocephalus*, *H. novæ zealandiæ*, *Gallinago pusilla*, *Limosa novæ zealandiæ*, *Larus bulleri*, *L. scopulinus*, *Sterna frontalis*, *S. antarctica*, *Porphyrio melanonotus* and a variety, *Notornis mantelli*, *Rallus philippensis*, *Ortygometra tabuensis*, *Ocydromus greyi*, *O. fuscus*, *O. australis*, *O. brachypterus*, *Ardea egretta*, *A. sacra*, *Botaurus pæciloptilus*, *Phalacrocorax varius*, *P. imperialis*, *P. punctatus*, *P. featherstoni*, and *Dio-medea exulans*.

The Introduction is very copious and well worthy of careful study. The extraordinary extinct avifauna of New Zealand is first discussed. Quoting the late Judge Maning, the author states that "the Moas still existed in considerable

numbers when the first Maori immigrants arrived, from 500 to 600 years ago." "They were destroyed wholesale by setting the grass and scrub on fire, the Maoris killing in this manner vast numbers more than they could use." As regards the existing avifauna, the peculiarities of the Carinatae are thus summarized :—

"Out of a total of 88 genera, 47 belong to the Limicolæ, Herodiones, and the five web-footed Orders, and these, being in a sense cosmopolitan, may for the present be put out of sight. Of the remaining 41 genera, 21 are strictly peculiar to New Zealand. But even in the other more widely-spread genera there are many species that are not known elsewhere. Thus, out of a total of 181 species, comprising the present list of our Carinatae, no less than 93 are strictly endemic. Even among the most diffuse Orders there are genera restricted in their range to New-Zealand rivers or coasts, or to the outlying islands. Thus among the Limicolæ we have two strictly peculiar genera, *Thinornis* and *Anarhynchus*, and among the Anseres two more, namely, *Hymenolæmus* and *Nesonetta*."

Good work deserves to be well supported ; and in the present instance it would seem to have met with its merits, the whole edition of 1000 copies being, if we understand it rightly, nearly disposed of. Few bird-books, we believe, have ever met with similar success.

50. *Buller on Mr. S. W. Silver's Collection of New-Zealand Birds.*

[A Classified List of Mr. S. William Silver's Collection of New-Zealand Birds (at the Manor-House, Letcomb Regis), with short Descriptive Notes by Sir Walter L. Buller, K.C.M.G., D.Sc., F.R.S. 8vo. London: 1888.]

This is a classified list of the stuffed specimens of New-Zealand birds contained in Mr. S. William Silver's private collection at Manor-House, Letcomb Regis. The collection, which is one of the most complete in Europe, was exhibited in the New-Zealand Court of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, where many of us will well recollect seeing it.

Short explanatory notes are given under the head of each

species, and a number of woodcuts from the 'Birds of New Zealand' are reproduced.

51. *Büttikofer on Birds from the Congo and S.W. Africa.*

[On Birds from the Congo and South-Western Africa. By J. Büttikofer. Notes Leyden Mus. x. p. 209.]

The author gives an account of about 300 specimens of birds made by Mr. P. J. van der Kellen in the region of the Upper Cuneni river, and east of it in the valleys of the Okavango and Umbella rivers. During a short stay on the Lower Congo the same collector procured examples of 13 species, of which a separate list is given. Mr. van der Kellen's headquarters were at Humpata, the colony of the Trek-Boers. *Neocichla kelleni*, from the Umbella river, and *Plocepasser rufo-scapulatus*, from the Kasinga river, are described and figured as new.

52. *Chapman's 'Bird-life of the Borders.'*

[Bird-life of the Borders; Records of Wild Sport and Natural History on Moorland and Sea. By Abel Chapman. London, 1889: Gurney & Jackson.]

Our brother-member, Mr. Abel Chapman, whose "Contributions to the Ornithology of Spain" (*Ibis*, 1884, pp. 66 *et seqq.*, 1888, pp. 444 *et seqq.*) all our readers will recollect with pleasure, has in this volume collected a number of his fugitive papers, which have appeared from time to time as newspaper articles, and has embellished it with more than fifty "rough pen-and-ink drawings" by himself, reproduced by photo-zincography, and "intended to serve as character-sketches rather than as portraits," but having, he tells us, "no pretensions either to scientific accuracy or artistic merit." As to the last quality we do not profess to give an opinion, but the sketches are nearly all spirited and convey the idea of life in a way that the professional artist often fails to do—one only (that on page 170) can we call bad, but most of them have great merit. As to the text, it is written rather from the sportsman's than from the naturalist's point of view; but it is

extremely readable, and may undeniably be consulted with profit by ornithologists—for instance, the remarks (pp. 7–16) on migration. But herein we venture to demur to one, at least, of the author's suppositions. He seems to think that all the individual birds of every species slide, so to speak, in regular order from south to north, and from north to south, according to the particular station that each individual keeps. This may be the case with some species; but observations, though confessedly imperfect, are not wanting to show that in other species the individuals which winter the furthest to the south are those which have their breeding-place furthest to the north, and thus the subject is far more complex than would appear from the simple diagram which the author gives us (p. 9) in illustration of his views. However, every contribution to this puzzling question helps to elucidate it, and, if on that account only, we are thankful to Mr. Abel Chapman for his book.

53. *Dixon on our Rarer Birds.*

[Our Rarer Birds: being Studies in Ornithology and Oology. By Charles Dixon. Pp. 373. 8vo. London: 1888.]

There seems to be no limit to the demand for popular books on natural history, and Mr. Dixon's volume on our rarer birds, of which he has kindly sent us a copy, will, no doubt, meet with a good reception. The title, however, is a little misleading, as it cannot be said in strictness that such species as the Nuthatch, Green Woodpecker, Stock Dove, and Heron, and many others descanted upon in this work have any claim to be considered as rarer birds. The woodcut illustrations in this volume are mostly well drawn and very pretty. As regards the reproduction of the lithographic frontispiece, representing the St. Kilda Wren, which is the same as that given in 'The Ibis,' 1885, pl. iii., there has, we observe, been a somewhat acrimonious controversy in the 'Athenæum.' This would have been avoided if Mr. Dixon had stated that he obtained his authority, not from the Secretary of the Zoological Society of London, who had nothing whatever to do with the matter, but from one of the former joint Editors of this Journal.

54. *Gould's 'Birds of New Guinea.'*

[The Birds of New Guinea and the adjacent Papuan Islands, including any new Species that may be discovered in Australia. By [the late] John Gould, F.R.S. &c. Part XXV. Folio. London: 1888.]

With this twenty-fifth part the great work of Gould upon the birds of New Guinea is brought to a conclusion. Bound up it makes five fine folio volumes, with 320 plates. It seems rather a pity to stop the work when, as we are told in the preface, only some 300 species have been figured out of a total of 1030 belonging to the Papuan Avifauna; but we suppose the publishers had no choice except to adhere to the promise made to the subscribers to finish the book in twenty-five parts. Of these only twelve were issued during Gould's lifetime, the remaining thirteen having been prepared by Mr. R. B. Sharpe, who has also written the preface and introduction. Part XXV. contains figures of the following species:—

Harpyopsis novæ guineæ.

Baza gurneyi.

Lorius tibialis.

Nesocentor milo.

Rectes aruensis.

Ianthoenas albigularis.

Carpophaga subflavescens.

— *van-wycki.*

Piezorhynchus axillaris.

— *medius.*

55. *Littleboy on the Birds of Hertfordshire.*

[Notes on Birds observed in Hertfordshire in 1887, and on the Birds frequenting the Tring Reservoirs. By [the late] John E. Littleboy. Trans. Hertf. N. H. Soc. & Field Club, v. p. 76.]

This, we regret to observe, is the last report on Hertfordshire birds we shall have from a very active and intelligent observer. Mr. Littleboy's paper was read in March last, but he died on the 3rd of August following, before the proof was corrected. Amongst the 21 species new to the Hertfordshire list are *Acrocephalus palustris*, *Anthus spinoletta*, and *Calandrella brachydactyla*. But a still greater rarity is the Marsh Sandpiper (*Totanus stagnatilis*), an example of which is stated to have been shot near the Tring Reservoirs by Mr. Walter Rothschild in October 1887, and to have been taken at first for an "immature or winter-plumaged Greenshank." As the

Marsh Sandpiper has not yet been recognized as a British bird, although occasionally met with in Northern France, it is very desirable that this specimen should be carefully examined by a competent authority, and its authenticity placed beyond doubt.

56. *Meyer on Pallas's Sand-Grouse in Bulgaria.*

[Ueber das Vorkommen des Steppenuhnes in Bulgarien. Von A. B. Meyer. Hugo's Jagd-Zeitung, Jahrg. 31, no. 23, p. 685.]

Dr. Meyer, being persuaded that Pallas's Sand-Grouse ought to have crossed Bulgaria on its way to Western Europe, has endeavoured to extract some evidence from King Ferdinand on the subject. The royal reply does not seem to us to be very convincing on the question, in fact, rather to prove a negative. But Dr. Meyer appears satisfied to deduce from it the conclusion that the Sand-Grouse *was* met with in Bulgaria in March 1888 near Sophia.

57. *Nelson on the Birds of Alaska.*

[Report on the Natural-History Collections made in Alaska between the years 1877 and 1881 by Edward W. Nelson. Edited by Henry W. Henshaw. With 21 plates. Washington: 1887.]

In our last number we noticed Mr. Turner's work on the birds of Alaska (*suprà*, p. 133). We have now a still more important volume of the same series of publications (Arctic Series of Publications issued in connexion with the Signal Service, U. S. A.) before us. Mr. Nelson was more than four years in Alaska, his headquarters having been at St. Michael's, whence, however, various expeditions were made along the coast and up the Yukon valley. Mr. Nelson also accompanied the U.S. s.s. 'Corwin' during her voyage through Bering's Straits in search of the 'Jeanette' in 1887, and is one of the few naturalists who have landed in Wrangel and Herald Islands. Of this excursion and the birds there met with he has already given us an excellent account (see *Ibis*, 1884, p. 105). We have now a capital memoir from the same pen on Alaskan ornithology, which, however, we regret to say, on account of the failure of the author's health, has been edited by Mr. Henshaw.

The collection amassed by Mr. Nelson during his sojourn in Alaska "amounted to over two thousand birdskins and fifteen hundred eggs." But all the other available materials in the Smithsonian Collections have been utilized for the present work, which is believed to embody "all of importance that is known concerning the birds of Alaska," except that the portion relating to the swimming-birds subsequent to the Anatidæ has been, "from unavoidable causes, curtailed."

Alaska, although it looks small on most maps, is of enormous size, the land-area within its limits being computed to embrace more than 580,000 geographical square miles. As regards its animal life, Mr. Nelson divides it into four "Faunal Districts":—(1) the Sitkan district, along the west coast, washed by the comparatively warm water of the Japanese current, clothed with forests of conifers, and backed by the coast-range of St. Elias and its adjacent giants; (2) the Aleutian Islands, destitute of trees, but covered with grass and ferns, where sea-fowl predominate; (3) the Alaskan Arctic district, a treeless coast-belt, which extends from the peninsula of Alaska through Bering's Straits, along the Arctic shore to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, with a mean annual temperature of only 25°; and (4) the Alasko-Canadian district, which is "coincident with the distribution of timber on the Alaskan mainland north of the coast-range. Full details are given of the physical characters of these districts and of their peculiarities in ornithic life.

Twenty Old-World species of birds are now known to occur in Alaska, namely:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Cyanecula suecica</i> . | 11. <i>Ægialitis mongola</i> . |
| 2. <i>Saxicola cenanthe</i> . | 12. <i>Charadrius dominicus fulvus</i> . |
| 3. <i>Phyllopeustes borealis</i> . | 13. <i>Limosa baueri</i> . |
| 4. <i>Parus cinctus obtectus</i> . | 14. <i>Tringa acuminata</i> . |
| 5. <i>Budytes flavus leucostriatus</i> . | 15. <i>Eurynorhynchus pygmæus</i> . |
| 6. <i>Anthus cervinus</i> . | 16. <i>Tringa ferruginea</i> . |
| 7. <i>Pyrrhula cassini</i> . | 17. <i>Anas penelope</i> . |
| 8. <i>Ulula cinerea lapponica</i> . | 18. <i>Oidemia fusca</i> . |
| 9. <i>Surnia ulula</i> . | 19. <i>Larus schistisagus</i> . |
| 10. <i>Archibuteo lagopus</i> . | 20. <i>Fulmarus glacialis glupischa</i> . |

Eleven species and subspecies are, so far as is yet known, believed to be peculiar to Alaska, of which six are Passeres (*Parus atricapillus turneri*, *Troglodytes alascensis*, *Leucosticte griseonucha*, *Plectrophenax hyperboreus*, *Melospiza cinerea*, and *Perisoreus canadensis fumifrons*), two are local forms of Ptarmigan (*Lagopus rupestris nelsoni* and *L. r. atkensis*), and the three others are respectively a Sandpiper, a Tern, and a Petrel (*Tringa ptilocnemis*, *Sterna aleutica*, and *Æstrelata fischeri*). The Sandpiper, which visits the Fur-seal Islands in summer for breeding-purposes, will doubtless turn up elsewhere; the Petrel, based on a single specimen we believe, requires further examination.

The main portion of the work which follows the introduction consists of nearly 200 pages, and gives copious and excellent notes on all the known species of Alaskan birds, in the systematic order of the A. O. U. Check-list. Counting subspecies, they appear to be 260 in number, of which 78 are Passeres, showing how greatly this group, which in tropical and temperate regions generally makes up more than half the avifauna, falls off in numbers in the extreme north. Twelve coloured plates illustrate the work, amongst which we may call special attention to that of the Pectoral Sandpiper, showing the extraordinary way in which the male bird inflates its throat in the love-season, and that of *Numenius tahitiensis*, a third species of Curlew, which has now occurred twice in Arctic America.

We have already (*suprà*, p. 143) given the results of the author's observations upon *Falco gyrfalco*. It is surprising to find that the Great Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) goes as far north as Norton Sound and the Arctic Ocean shores, where specimens were obtained from the district between the Mackenzie and Anderson Rivers.

A useful Bibliography of Alaskan ornithology concludes this valuable memoir.

58. *Pleske's Revision of the Ornis of Turkestan.*

[Revision der Turkestanischen Ornis. Nach Sammlungen des verstorbenen Conservators Valerian Russow, verfasst von Theodor Pleske. Mém. l'Acad. Imp. Sci. St. Pétersb. sér. 7, xxxvi. no. 3, 1888].

The late Valerian Russow, one of the most active and intelligent collectors of modern days, accumulated a splendid series of birds during the eight months that he passed in Turkestan in 1878*. These have been now worked out by Herr Theodor Pleske, and form the principal material used in the preparation of the very useful memoir now before us. Russow's headquarters during his sojourn in Turkestan was at Tschinas, or Chinas, on the Jaxartes; but excursions were made to the Iskander-Kul and other places, and Samarcand was visited on the route home. The result of his exertions was a collection of 800 skins of birds, besides eggs and nests in great quantity.

The known birds of Russian Turkestan, according to Herr Pleske's list, are 419 in number. We observe that *Bubo turcomanus* (usually regarded as a subspecies of *B. maximus*) is declared to be quite distinct and more nearly allied in structure to *B. ascalaphus* and *B. bengalensis*. Other noteworthy species in the Turkestan list are *Emberiza stewarti*, *Phylloscopus pseudo-borealis*, and *Myiophoneus temmincki*.

59. Ridgway on new American Hawks.

[Description of a new Western Subspecies of *Accipiter velox* (Wils.) and Subspecific Diagnosis of *A. cooperi mexicanus* (Swains.). By R. Ridgway. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 92.]

Subspecific characters are given of *Accipiter velox rufilatus* from Western North America, and *A. cooperi mexicanus* from Western U. S. and Mexico.

60. Ridgway on *Æstrelata sandwichensis*.

[Note on *Æstrelata sandwichensis*, Ridgw. By Robert Ridgway. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 104.]

The type specimen of this species has been sent to Mr. Salvin for comparison, and is pronounced to be = *Æ. phaeopygia*, Salvad., as Mr. Ridgway had already anticipated.

* Cf. Ibis, 1879, p. 384.

61. *Shufeldt on the Osteology of Arctic and Sub-Arctic Water-birds.*

[Contributions to the Comparative Osteology of Arctic and Sub-Arctic Water-Birds. Part I. By R. W. Shufeldt, M.D., C.M.Z.S. Plates I.-V. Journ. Anat. and Physiology, xxiii. p. 1 (1888).]

Dr. Shufeldt's observations and excellent illustrations in the present memoir are based upon a very extensive collection of skeletons of Arctic waterfowl placed under his charge for description by Prof. Baird, to which have been added materials from other quarters. The skeleton of *Alca torda* is described at full length, and comparative notes on *Alca impennis* are added. The plates refer also to other species that will be subsequently described.

62. *Shufeldt on Gallus bankiva.*

[Observations upon the Morphology of *Gallus bankiva* of India. (Including a Complete Account of its Skeleton.) By R. W. Shufeldt, M.D., C.M.Z.S. Journ. Comp. Med. and Surgery, Oct. 1888.]

Dr. Shufeldt describes the anatomy and osteology of a pair of the Wild Jungle-fowl of India (*Gallus bankiva*)—the supposed origin of our domestic Fowl—with the idea that, as suggested by Forbes, it may serve as a standard of comparison of the various races of the domestic birds that have descended from it. Good illustrative woodcuts are given.

63. *Stejneger on the European Marsh-Tits.*

[Notes on European Marsh-Tits, with Description of a new Subspecies from Norway. By L. Stejneger. Pr. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 71.]

Mr. Stejneger maintains that the so-called *Parus borealis* of the Alps is quite different from the true *P. borealis* of Scandinavia, and should be called *P. montanus*, having been so named by Baldenstein in 1822. "In Northern Europe the true *P. borealis* occurs; in Central Europe the large and more brown-headed *P. montanus*; their habitats are widely separated and isolated. On the other hand, *P. palustris* occurs all over Europe (except in Great Britain, where it is represented by *P. palustris dresseri*), breeding even in the same localities as *P. borealis* and *P. montanus*." Moreover

the author recognizes a third form of Marsh-Tit in the Scandinavian peninsula—*Parus colletti*—a “subspecies of the *borealis* group,” and points out its distinctive characters. What does Mr. Collett say to this notable discovery? We should be glad to have his opinion on his namesake.

64. *Stejneger on the Hawaiian Avifauna.*

[Further Contributions to the Hawaiian Avifauna. By Leonhard Stejneger. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 93.]

Mr. Stejneger's article is based on a new collection lately received from Mr. Valdemer Knudsen, made in the island of Kauai and the adjacent small island of Niihau. It contains representatives of 11 species, of which one (*Puffinus knudseni*) is described as new. A new generic term, *Thyellodromas*, is made for the subgenus to which this Shearwater belongs, the term “*Thyellus*, Glover,” usually applied to it, being strictly only a synonym of *Puffinus*. Two more specimens of the lately described *Himantopus knudseni* (Stejn. Pr. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1887, p. 81) are in the collection, and serve to confirm the species. A full account is given of *Anas wyvilliana*, ScL. (Zool. Voy. Chall. vii. p. 98, t. xxii.), of which four specimens were in the collection, and show remarkable individual variations. The species is stated to be most nearly related to *Anas aberti*, of N.W. Mexico, and not to *A. superciliosa*.

65. *Stejneger on the European Crested Titmice.*

[Notes on the European Crested Titmice. By L. Stejneger. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 113.]

Mr. Stejneger's comparison of three Scandinavian examples of *Parus cristatus* with a series from Central Europe has brought him to the conclusion that they belong to two distinct forms. “The former are greyer above, the latter more brownish, but the exact shade is very difficult to describe.” He proposes therefore to restrict the name *Parus cristatus* to the Scandinavian bird, and to call the other *Parus mitratus*, a name applied by Brehm to one of his subspecies. “It would be very interesting to know,” he continues, “whether the Crested Titmouse of Scotland belongs to either

of these two forms, or shows any peculiarity of its own, entitling it to separate recognition. British ornithologists not prejudiced against possibilities of this kind ought to look into the matter." Perhaps some of our brother members of the B. O. U. will give us their opinion upon this weighty question, if they are able to recognize the alleged differences between *P. cristatus* and *P. mitratus*.

66. *Trumbull on North-American Game Birds.*

[Names and Portraits of Birds which interest Gunners, with Descriptions in Language understood of the People. By Gurdon Trumbull. 8vo. New York: 1888.]

This will, no doubt, be a useful book for the class of persons for whom it is intended, which in the United States is numerous. The species included are those of the eastern half of the States; the scientific titles are those of the American Check-list. The illustrations printed in the letter-press are sufficiently characteristic to be of great assistance in identifying the species. The popular and local names are very fully given.

67. *Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen on Additions to the Ornis Austro-Hungarica.*

[Neue Arten und Formen der Ornis Austro-Hungarica, mit genauen Nachweisen und kritischen Bemerkungen. Von Victor, Ritter von Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen. Mitth. d. Orn. Ver. in Wien, 1888.]

The author, well known for his active interest in European ornithology, chronicles the recent additions to the ornis of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as a supplement to his and E. F. von Homeyer's 'Verzeichniss der bisher in Oesterreich und Ungarn beobachteten Vögel,' issued in 1886. Eleven species or subspecies are spoken of, amongst which is the curious Pelican obtained on the Danube in 1887, and referred by Herr Dr. Stef. Baron v. Washington (Ann. d. k. k. nat.-hist. Hofmus. iii. p. 62) to *Pelecanus sharpii*. But we have some doubts whether the so-called *P. sharpii* (cf. P. Z. S. 1871, p. 632) is, after all, anything more than *P. onocrotalus* in abnormal colouring.

68. *Zoological Record*, 1887.

[The *Zoological Record* for 1887, being Volume the Twenty-fourth of the *Record of Zoological Literature*. Edited by Frank E. Beddard, M.A., F.Z.S. 8vo. London: 1888.]

Mr. A. H. Evans deserves, in our opinion, very great credit for his article "Aves" in the '*Zoological Record*' for 1887. To expect that such a laborious and complicated piece of work can be entirely free from errors is ridiculous. If, therefore, we point out a few slips in the 76 pages of this most useful publication, it is not from any wish to find fault with it, but with the hope of assisting our brother ornithologists who may use it, and of inducing the author to make it more nearly correct in future.

With the general classification used in the *Record* we cannot naturally do otherwise than agree; but we cannot understand why the *Oligomyodæ* should be placed first, when they are undoubtedly intermediate between the *Oscines* and the *Picariæ*. Nor can we approve of the alphabetical series of families adopted in the *Oscines*, which must cause many difficulties to workers, the most nearly allied groups being thus placed far asunder. It would be better to adopt at once the arrangement of the '*British Museum Catalogue of Birds*,' which is, at all events, something definite to refer to.

The following is a list of some of the *errata* and *emendanda* which we have noticed:—

P. 5. "*Certhilauda duponti*, n. subsp.," should be "*C. duponti lusitanica*, n. subsp." See p. 42.

P. 6. "*Haliastur*" *vocifer* should be "*Haliaetus*." This is Mr. Bowker's error, but should have been corrected.

P. 45. *Chlorura* belongs to the *Ploceidæ*, not to the *Fringillidæ*.

P. 50. *Melilestes* belongs to the *Meliphagidæ*, not to the *Nectariniidæ*.

P. 54. *Podoces* should, in our opinion, go rather with the *Corvidæ* than the *Sturnidæ*.

P. 54. The *Sylviidæ* have now become rather a refuge for the destitute. Can *Accentor*, *Cryptolopha*, and *Thalarcheus* in any wise be held to belong to it?

P. 61. *Micropus melanoleucus* from Sumatra is a Pycnotine bird. See Sharpe, Cat. B. vi. p. 64. *Micropus melanoleucus* of Shufeldt is a Swift, more correctly to be called *Cypselus melanoleucus*. Our American friends are responsible for this error, which has been caused by their unwarrantable resuscitation of *Micropus* instead of *Cypselus*.

P. 66. The family Plataleidæ cannot be properly maintained as distinct from the Ibididæ.

XXIV.—Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.

WE have received the following letters addressed to the Editor of 'The Ibis:'—

Northrepps, January, 1889.

SIR,—I am desirous of offering a few remarks on some of the Raptorial birds referred to in the last number of 'The Ibis.'

In the Notes by Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Whitehead on birds collected by the latter gentleman in Northern Borneo, it is remarked, on p. 66, under the head of *Circus spilonotus*, that the series "seems to prove conclusively that the sexes are similar when they are fully adult."

In confirmation of this opinion, I may mention that Mr. F. W. Styan was so good as to show me a specimen from Foochow (one of a series recorded by him in 'The Ibis,' 1887, p. 231), which he assured me was a female by dissection, but which had assumed the grey plumage; a memorandum which I made at the time states that this specimen "was entirely in male plumage, except a slight mottling of brown interspersed with the grey on the back."

At p. 75 of the same paper Mr. Sharpe refers to a remarkable Falcon in the British Museum from the Lawas River as an example of "the dark richly-coloured Peregrine of the Sunda Islands," with reference to which I wish to observe that the Lawas-River specimen is, so far as my experience goes, quite unique; this very abnormally coloured Falcon was described in detail in 'The Ibis' for 1882, p. 303.

To 'The Ibis' for 1888, p. 145, on the authority of Professor